UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Housekeepers' Chat Friday, March 8, 1929.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Know Your Insecticides." Information prepared by W. S. Abbott, Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, U. S. D. A. Menu and recipe from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

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The up-to-date housewife reads labels.

Whether she's buying strawberry preserves or a preparation guaranteed to kill flies, she looks for the label.

More and more I am becoming convinced of the importance of reading labels. Take food products, for instance -- those which come in packages and bottles -- coffee, jams, jellies, spices, and so forth. The only way to be sure of what's inside the package or bottle, and of how much you are getting for your money, is to read the label.

Labels are not confined to foods. Insecticides are labelled. If you go to the drug store, ask the salesman to give you something which will kill moths, flies, cockroaches, and bedbugs, and take the first package he hands you, without reading the label, who's to blame if the stuff you bought fails to kill moths, flies, cockroaches, or anything else?

In order to protect the users of insecticides, and fungicides, Congress passed the Insecticide Act of 1910, which covers all insecticides and fungicides that are shipped from one state into another. The enforcement of this act has been placed in the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

I was much interested in learning something about this law from W. S. Abbott, of the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration. Briefly stated, the law requires three things:

First, that the label on an insecticide or a fungicide shall not contain any "statement, design, or device that is false or misleading in any particular."

Second, that, when used as directed, these preparations shall not be injurious to vegetation.

Third, that the label shall contain either the names and percentage amount of each ingredient that is not effective against the insects or diseases named on

the label, or the name and percentage amount of each ingredient that is effective and the total percent of the ineffective or inert ingredients.

Perhaps you are wondering how this information can help you and me. It can't, unless we read the labels. Insecticides must be intelligently used. Before buying any of them we should carefully read the label and directions. It will not pay us to go into a store, ask for something to kill bugs, and accept the first bottle or can which is offered us, without reading the label.

The label will tell us what insects the product is supposed to control, how to use it, and how much water or filler we are buying.

Unfortunately, there are two cases in which the Insecticide Act cannot protect us. This law does not cover insecticides and fungicides that are made and sold in the same State. It does not include newspaper or magazine advertisements, or booklets that do not accompany the product when shipped from one State to another, and these are often very misleading. Testimonials, in particular, while they make interesting reading, should be taken with a grain of salt.

There are certain types of preparations, which, if we accept the advice of the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, we will never buy.

For example, if we find an insecticide which is recommended for use in the food and drinking water of poultry or animal pets, and if the makers of this insecticide claim that it will kill or control such external parasites as lice, mites, ticks, and fleas -- or will protect stock from flies -- we are warned to be very skeptical.

Many such preparations have been tested by the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, but not a single one of these insecticides shows even the slightest promise of any value. Perhaps you wonder why they appear on the market. The only reason seems to be that they can be bought for 18 cents a gallon, and sold, in small containers, at the rate of $64 a gallon, which represents a pretty good profit.

I don't know how many of you women are interested in buying products which will protect trees from insects and diseases. If you have an orchard, no doubt you are familiar with the remedies sold to protect fruit trees. At times there appear on the market liquids, powders, and capsules that are to be placed in a hole in the tree, under the bark and in the soil, or paints, to be applied to the trunk of the tree. These chemicals, according to the advertising literature, are taken up by the sap, and carried to all parts of the tree, where they kill all insects, or control all fungus or bacterial diseases. Mr. Abbott says that to date not one of any value has been found, and furthermore, most of them actually harm the trees. The use of such remedies is not only a waste of time and money, but may cause serious damage to the orchard, and a loss of the crop through failure to control insects and diseases.

Mr. Abbott has a special caution for housewives, He says that if we are offered an attractive little case containing a liquid, powder, or crystals, and

told that simply hanging this in a room will not only drive away or kill moths, ants, roaches, flies and mosquitoes, but will also disinfect the room, purify the air, and prevent diseases, we should refuse to buy. Such glittering promises cannot be fulfilled.

"In learning to know insecticides and fungicides," said Mr. Abbott, "you should pay particular attention to the statements that appear on their labels. It will generally be found that these statements are truthful and accurate, and if directions are carefully followed, the preparations should be effective for the purpose claimed. But you must read the labels, in order to know the claims."

Now, if the sudden transition does not make you dizzy, we'll go from the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration to the Bureau of Home Economics, and see what the Menu Specialist has planned for us today.

Let's write the menu, in our Radio Records: Simmered Haddock with Curry Sauce; Baked Potatoes; Quick-Cooked Cabbage; Sliced Oranges with Grated Coconut sprinkled over the top; Sugar Cookies.

Our main dish is simmered haddock. If haddock is not available, some other large fish might do as well -- cod, halibut, or salmon. To serve with the fish, we want a curry sauce, I see the Menu Specialist is giving us a special recipe for Curry Sauce. There are nine ingredients in this Curry Sauce, and if you are wise you'll abbreviate the word tablespoon, for I see it's used five times. Big T for tablespoon and small t for teaspoon. Here's the recipe for Curry Sauce:

4 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon chopped green pepper
2 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons chopped celery
1 teaspoon curry
1 teaspoon salt
3 drops tabasco
3 tablespoons flour, and
2 cups milk

Nine ingredients for Curry Sauce:

Melt the butter in a skillet. Add the green pepper, onion, and celery. Cook for 2 or 3 minutes. Stir into this the seasoning and the flour. Mix well. Add the cold milk. Cook for 3 or 4 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour this sauce over the simmered fish after it is placed on a hot platter for serving.

To repeat the menu: Simmered Haddock with Curry Sauce; Baked Potatoes; Quick-Cooked Cabbage; Sliced Oranges with Grated Coconut sprinkled over the top; Sugar Cookies.

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Monday: "Planning the Kitchen Garden."

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